LODGING HOUSES (QUEENSTOWN).

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 13 June 1882;—*for*,

COPIES "of REPORT of THOMAS GRAY, Esquire, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trade:"

"And, of REPORT or REPORTS made by Dr. BRODIE, Local Government Board Inspector, on the State of the LODGING HOUSES in QUEENSTOWN."

Board of Trade, 29 June 1882. } T. H. FARRER.

— No. 1. —

(M. 26,777.)

REPORT of THOMAS GRAY, Esq.

Sir, Queeenstown, 20 October 1881.

IN accordance with your instructions, that I should on visiting this place make inquiry concerning the accommodation provided in the lodging-houses here for emigrants waiting to be embarked on board steamships sailing for America, I have to report as follows:

Two facts I have beyond question ascertained—

First, that the proprietors or lessees of the houses into which emigrants are taken to lodge, have in their employ persons, male and female, who visit the railway station to attend on emigrants on arrival and guide them to their establishments. The persons thus employed at Queenstown seem to have come to a common understanding among themselves whereby contentions over the persons of arriving emigrants are avoided on the arrival of a train.

Second, that there is no system of licensing the lodging-houses, no organised system of inspecting or registering them, no system of taking returns of the numbers they are fit to accommodate, nor of the numbers actually on the premises at any one time; nor is there any system of licensing the persons employed by the lodging-house keepers to attend the arrival of trains.

Captain Christian, the principal officer here, has endeavoured to get information on the subject from Mr. W. A. Dickson, the superintendent of police for the Queenstown district, but that police officer in a letter written to Captain Christian, which is appended hereto, and is marked (A.), states that he has failed to obtain reliable data.

During the months of April, May, and June, large numbers of emigrants find their way to Queenstown; those three months form the busy season, when the large Transatlantic lines put on extra steamers solely to convey the increased numbers, and sometimes then the steamers are too full to take all the emigrants here; as many as 500 have been kept back from one ship this season.

The emigrant having arrived at Queenstown finds himself taken to one or other of the houses, and when the numbers of emigrants are large, he finds no adequate

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adequate sleeping accommodation. On trustworthy information, I have learned that four or five men are sometimes put into one bed, while others lie about the floor, and that 26 people have been known to lie in a room of about 17 feet by 10 feet, but emigrants do not in the busy season occupy during the whole night even these closely-packed places. I was informed by a responsible person that while some of the emigrants snatch an hour or two of rest, others are afforded facilities elsewhere for singing and dancing, so that the same bed or floor place may be occupied by different persons during the 24 hours.

One of the medical officers informed me that the annual average number of typhus fever cases in Queenstown is five, but that about two months ago typhus broke out in one of the tramp's lodging-houses, that it has extended to the town, that 65 cases have followed, that it is still spreading in the town and beyond it.

I find that on the 6th day of May last the subject of lodging-houses in Queenstown was brought before the Town Commissioners, and that one of the members proposed that the lodging-house clauses of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, should be put in force. This proposal met with active opposition, and did not even find a seconder, notwithstanding the fact that it was made on the strength of the third report of one of the health officers, and although that officer has I believe now made 11 successive reports to the Town Commissioners.

The Local Government Board are well aware of the existing state of things, and made a move in April last, but the Town Commissioners have, I learn, done nothing.

In conclusion, I have to point out that the above being the state of things here, you may perhaps deem it necessary, in addition to pressing the subject on the Local Government Board, to bring the matter before the steamship lines which call here. If typhus goes on spreading, or if any other virulent and contagious or infectious disease should break out, it is a question whether, under the existing disgraceful state of things, emigrant passengers can be allowed to be embarked here to the danger of all the emigrants shipped elsewhere. At Liverpool there are properly regulated caravanseries to which competent medical men have access; at Plymouth there is a proper depôt in which emigrants when detained are kept under medical superintendence; but here, where 300 have been shut out from one ship and 500 from another ship, and where several hundreds of emigrants may be kept waiting even as long as from five to seven days for a ship, they are left to sleep, or rather to lodge about as best they can, in overcrowded unwholesome places, where disease may at any time break out, which they may carry on board with them, to the danger of themselves and of all persons in the same ship.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Thomas Gray.*

To the Secretary, Board of Trade,
London.

Enclosure in No. 1.

(A.)

Dear Mr. Christian, 1, Crescent, Queenstown, 28 April.

EXCUSE my not having written to you ere this, but I have found it much more difficult to obtain any information as to the lodging-houses at Queenstown than I anticipated. It appears that last year some inquiries were made about the overcrowding, and this year the proprietors are very reticent of affording any information, so that I really can give you no reliable data as to the number of people actually taken in by these people. Sullivan I believe takes in the largest number, and it is believed that 150 would on some occasions fall short of the number of persons in the house. The emigrants complain of the crowding; one man to day said that he could not count the number of men sleeping in his room, there were five beds with four or five men in each bed, and he and some others had to sleep on the floor; this, however, was not in Sullivan's.

If I can ascertain any particulars I will not fail to let you know.

Yours, &c.
(signed) *W. A. Dickson.*

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— No. 2. —

(28,351—81.)

DR. BRODIE'S FIRST REPORT.

Queenstown (Town).

Gentlemen, Cork, 12 November 1881.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 27,919, dated 8th instant, calling my attention to the letter addressed to the Town Commissioners, a copy of which was forwarded to me, and requesting me to visit Queenstown again, and to report on the following points:—

"1st. Whether anything, and what, has been done in accordance with the suggestions contained in that letter."

"2nd. The last case of typhus fever occuring, and how many patients are now under treatment."

"3rd. List of lodging-houses, names of owners and keepers."

"4th. Explanation from executive sanitary officer, Mr. Ahern, as to the statement in his letter of 12th September, that there were not more than half a dozen such houses in the town, whereas it appears from the Inspector's report that there are no less than 36 such houses."

In obedience to your instructions, I took the earliest opportunity of visiting Queenstown, which was on Thursday last, having been engaged in Bandon on the day before. I had an interview on Thursday with the clerk of the Town Commissioners and also the medical officers, and learned from the former that he had issued notices to the Town Commissioners to meet at 12 o'clock the following day to consider and adopt bye-laws for carrying out the provisions of the Public Health Act, 1878.

The Commissioners met at 12 o'clock on Friday. I was in attendance. There were nine members present.

1. It was proposed by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. O'Callaghan, "That the bye-laws under the Public Health Act be adopted, subject to approval of the Local Government Board."

Herewith printed copy of the "bye-laws" proposed. Enclosure No. 1.

Mr. Doran proposed as an amendment, "That the 'bye-laws' not being sufficiently explicit be referred to a committee."

The amendment failed to obtain a seconder, and the original resolution was carried, Mr. Doran alone dissenting.

This meeting was made the occasion of grave complaints by some of the members about the unsanitary condition of the slaughter-houses, of which there are four in the town, three of the number being situated in Old-street, one adjoining the house No. 41, to which house Dr. Downing alludes in his report, and from which 14 or 15 cases have been removed.

I endeavoured to gain access to two of those slaughter-houses but did not succeed, although men were at work inside.

The sub-sanitary officer was directed to visit the slaughter-houses, daily, and the consulting sanitary officer to make a weekly report, but this, in my opinion, does not by any means meet the requirements of the matter at issue, which is the prevention of and stamping out of the present epidemic of typhus fever; and although the unclean state of the slaughter-houses may be a factor in the development of the fever in question, the huddling together of human beings in too limited spaces must necessarily be accredited with the principal share in its production.

2. As regards the existing state of the epidemic, eight cases have been admitted to hospital since 1st November, including two on Friday and one on Saturday.

In October - -	20	cases admitted to hospital.
„ September -	13	„ „
„ August - -	6	„ „

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There exists little doubt that the sanitary authority have been unmindful of their duty in not having acted on the repeated reports of their medical officers and as oft repeated remonstrances of the Local Government Board. In my opinion the medical officers (Downing and Townsend) are entitled to great credit for the impartial independent manner in which they discharged their duties in the face of a hostile Board.

Enclosure No. 2.

3. The secret of this animadversion will become apparent, as may be perceived from the annexed return of a number of the lodging-houses and their owners, that no fewer than eight of them appertain to individual members of the Town Commissioners.

I may here state as an instance of the extent of the overcrowding of those houses that Mr. Gray, in his letter to the Board of Trade, dated 20th October 1881, alludes to a fact of which I have been personally informed also, that when the beds in the lodging-houses are full an itinerant musician is introduced to attract the attention of the "sleepers," who are encouraged to rise and join the dance in which those who have been unable to obtain sleeping accommodation are engaged. And when this ruse has succeeded in getting those in bed to vacate their places, the beds are then occupied by those who first commenced the dancing, so that the same bed or floor place may be occupied by different persons during the night.

It is therefore not difficult to comprehend the fearful state of overcrowding that must necessarily exist, and the consequent poisonous state of the air.

The agent to the Transatlantic Shipping Company received on Thursday last a telegram, "Not to ship any emigrants owing to the wide spread of fever in the town."

Mr. Ahearn, Clerk, Town Commissioners, addressed a letter to the several shipping agents, of which the following is a copy:—

> "The present state of typhus fever in Queenstown, as reported by the sanitary authority this day, is one case in a tenement house totally unconnected with emigrant lodging-houses; nine cases in hospital. The Town Commissioners have this day adopted 'bye-laws' for the registration of lodging-houses."

The fever has somewhat abated, but still there is enough of it to cause anxiety; the slaughter-houses will also be a source of trouble, unless there is a rigid daily inspection by the sanitary sub-officer, and weekly report by consulting sanitary officer. The sanitary condition of the "Rock" is in such a deplorable state that it will always be a cause of anxiety and danger until the sanitary authority do something to improve its sewerage and its privy accommodation.

The continuance of the unsatisfactory state of things in Queenstown for so long a period is mainly attributable to the neglect of the sanitary authority to perform the duties to which they are legally bound. And the fact of their giving attention to the slaughter-houses now at the last hour cannot be viewed in any other light than an endeavour to relieve themselves of blame for a dereliction of duty prompted by self interest.

Let us now hope that as Providence has been pleased to cause an improvement and abatement in the epidemic which has for some months past prevailed in the town and endangered its future prosperity, the sanitary authority even at the eleventh hour will leave nothing undone on their part to have the provisions of the Public Health Act efficiently and stringently enforced.

Enclosures Nos. 3 and 4.

4. Herewith executive sanitary officer's explanation, also anonymous communication describing constitution of Town Commissioners' Board.

The file of papers returned herewith.

I have, &c.

To the Local Government Board. (signed) *T. Brodie.*

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Enclosure 1, in No 2.

TOWN OF QUEENSTOWN.

ABSTRACT of RULES for the Regulation of this LODGING-HOUSE.

1.—The keeper of this lodging-house shall number the door of each lodging-room in figures of at least two inches in length, in the same manner, respectively, as they are numbered in the above Schedule, and shall not receive a greater number of lodgers than is expressed therein, which Schedule shall be hung up in a conspicuous place in each lodging-room, and kept at all times visible and legible.

2.—The keeper of this house shall reduce the number of lodgers upon receiving notice to that effect from the local authority.

3.—Rooms used as kitchen or scullery, for the use of lodgers, shall not be occupied as sleeping apartments.

4.—Cellars or rooms in the basement, or below the level of the ground, shall not be occupied or used as sleeping apartments.

5.—Persons of opposite sexes shall not occupy the same sleeping apartment, except married persons, or parents and their children under 14, or children under 10 years of age.

6.—The windows of this lodging-house shall be kept open from 9 o'clock till 11 in the forenoon, and from 2 till 4 in the afternoon of each day; and the keeper shall provide in every sleeping room a sufficient quantity of slop buckets, and other necessary vessels and utensils for the use of the lodgers.

7.—The floors of all the rooms, the passages and stairs of this house, shall be swept before 10 o'clock, a.m. each day, and washed every Friday; and the walls and ceilings well lime-washed twice each year; and all bed-clothes kept clean; and all night-soil, filth, &c., shall be removed before 8 o'clock in the morning, and after 10 o'clock at night.

8.—In case of the illness of any inmate or lodger, through fever or any contagious disease, in this house, the keeper shall give immediate notice thereof to the inspector of lodging-houses, or to the poor law relieving officer of the parish, *under a penalty not exceeding* 40 *s.* for every 24 hours he neglects to give such notice; and shall cause the bed and bed-clothes used by any such person to be cleansed and scoured, and the room to be thoroughly lime-washed.

9.—Sufficient accommodation for cooking and washing, and a good supply of pure water, shall be provided for the use of the lodgers.

10.—The keeper of this lodging-house shall, on changing his residence, give notice thereof to the registrar, in order that this ticket may be cancelled, and such lodging-house keeper shall not receive lodgers into any other house in said borough, until same be duly registered.

N.B.—The penalty upon conviction of a breach of any of these bye-laws will not be less than 1 *s.*, and not more than 5 *l.*

(By Order.)

James Ahern, Town Clerk.

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Enclosure 2, in No. 2.

Queenstown Common Lodging Houses for Emigrants.

	Occupier.	Where Situate.	Owner.	Observations.
1	Mr. E. King - - -	Midleton-street - -	Michael English.	
2	„ D. Meade - -	- ditto - - -	Mr. C. Seymour - -	Town Commissioner.
3	„ M. Byrne - -	King's-square - -	- ditto - - -	- ditto - ditto.
4	„ J. Kershow - -	- ditto - - -	Margaret Gortwarthe.	
5	„ D. Hume - -	- ditto - - -	Sisters of Mercy, Queenstown.	
6	„ W. Elliott - -	King-street - - -	Miss E. Duvla.	
7	„ R. Barry - - -	- ditto - - -	Jeremiah O'Neill.	
8	Miss Chalke - - -	- ditto - - -	Miss Chalke.	
9	Mr. J. Crowley - -	Harbour-row - -	Mr. J. FitzGerald - -	Town Commissioner.
10	„ T. Dockery - -	- ditto - - -	James Denery.	
11	„ Ellis - - -	Harbour View - -	Margaret Barry.	
12	„ G. Sullivan - -	King's Bench - -	Mr. D. Cahill - -	Town Commissioner.
13	„ D. Mackey - -	- ditto - - -	„ T. Tuomy - -	- ditto - ditto.
14	„ J. Murphy - -	B. Roche's-row - -	John Mackey.	
15	„ J. Long - - -	- ditto - - -	E. Chapman.	
16	Mrs. Curran - - -	Harbour View - -	C. M. Seymour	
17	Mr. D. Keliher - -	Lynche's Quay - -	W. D. Seymour.	
18	„ Barry - - -	- ditto - - -	N. G. Seymour.	
19	„ T. Driscoll - -	Harbour-row - - -	Mr. R. Sullivan - -	Town Commissioner.
20	Mrs. Fionle - - -	Thomas-street - -	W. H. Denahy.	
21	„ Lalor - - -	West View - - -	Margaret Barry.	
22	Mr. E. Byrne - -	- ditto - - -	Mrs. Brash.	
23	„ Tinton - - -	Queen-street - - -	B. J. Alcock.	
24	„ R. Hennessy - -	Clifton-place - - -	Mr. J. O'Sullivan - -	Town Commissioner.
25	Mrs. Donahue - -	- ditto - - -	- ditto - - -	- ditto - ditto.
26	Mr. M. Coleman - -	Scott's-square - -	Representatives of E. Olden.	
27	Miss Lane - - -	- ditto - - -	- ditto.	
28	Mr. P. FitzGerald - -	Square - - - -	Mrs. Tierney.	
29	„ P. Scully - - -	Queen's-street - -	W. H. Baldwin.	

The above form portion of the 36 referred to by me in report to Local Government Board.

Enclosure 3, in No. 2.

Town Commissioners' Office, Queenstown,
10 November 1881.

Sir,

In reply to Local Government Board's letter of 8th instant, requiring an explanation as to a statement in my letter to the Board, dated 12th September, "that there are not more than half dozen" common lodging-houses in Queenstown,—

I beg to state that the houses referred to were the low-class houses on the "Rock" and elsewhere, where tramps and persons of that class lodged, and which are without any sanitary accommodation and totally unfit for lodging-houses, and could be dealt with without the adoption of bye-laws.

This view is borne out by the remainder of my letter; the whole extract reads thus:—

"There are not more than half dozen houses used as common lodging-houses, independent of houses, public and private, where emigrants stop in the season for emigration, which lasts about three months; the remainder of the year such houses are used only by the occupiers."

I am, &c.
(signed) *James Ahern*,
Executive Sanitary Officer.

Dr. Brodie,
Local Government Board Inspector.

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Enclosure 4, in No 2.

Queenstown (Town).

To the Local Government Board.

Honourable Sirs,

ENCLOSED is paragraph from the "Cork Examiner" of to-day, showing from the dispensary report the state of things in this town, managed by a set of Commissioners as per enclosed list, nine of whom, including the Chairman and Town Clerk, keep public-houses. The last four are composed of a butcher, a blockmaker, and two clerks.

I am, &c.
A Ratepayer.

"Queenstown Dispensary.—A meeting of the Queenstown Dispensary Committee was "held yesterday, Dr. D. Scott in the chair. Also present: Messrs. Savage, French, "Captain W. D. Seymour, P. Barrett, Maurice Savage, Timothy Murray, Dr. Townsend, "Dr. Downing, Dr. Hodges, and Reverend Mr. Keller, Administrator, Queenstown.

"Dr. W. C. Downing reported as follows:—'I regret to say that 13 cases of typhus fever "'have been admitted to hospital from my district since last report. This epidemic I "'attribute to filth, overcrowding of tenement and lodging-houses, and foul emanations "'from slaughter-houses.'"

"Dr. R. H. Townsend reported as follows:—'Two cases of typhus fever occurred in "'the eastern district. Since the last meeting of the committee of management patients "'were removed to hospital, their bedding, clothing, &c., thoroughly disinfected, and I "'am glad to be able to say that no new case has since appeared. In other respects the "'eastern district continues healthy.' No action was taken on the reports, and the "meeting adjourned."

Names of Commissioners referred to.

J. Fitzgerald	Chairman.	J. Garde	Commissioner.
J. Ahern	Town Clerk.	W. Raymond	ditto.
J. Sullivan	Commissioner.	D. Twomey	ditto - butcher.
T. O'Reilly	ditto.	F. Harris	ditto - blockmaker.
E. Farrell	ditto.	C. T. Doran	ditto - clerk.
— Campbell	ditto.	P. Callaghan	ditto - clerk.
C. Seymour	ditto.		

Queenstown, 9 November 1881.

— No. 3. —

(No. 29,243—81.)

DR. BRODIE'S SECOND REPORT.

Queenstown (Town).

Gentlemen, Queenstown, 25 November 1881.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 23rd instant, with a file of papers from the Chief Secretary's Office, relating to the outbreak of typhus fever in the Queenstown urban sanitary district, and in reply to your inquiry, "what has been done in the matter since the date of my report, a copy of which was enclosed in the Board's letter of the 15th instant to the Under Secretary," I beg to state that since then steps have been taken to improve the sanitary condition of the town, and thereby check the spread of the disease. Additional scavengers and limewashers have been told off to cleanse the streets and limewash the houses in the lanes and back streets of the town. The houses in the "Rock" and other localities where fever prevailed have been disinfected, also the clothes of the patients.

The owners of slaughter-houses are under notice under the 130th section of the Public Health Act, 1878, to abate the nuisances complained of. The owner of one of the slaughter-houses, the principal one in the town, has voluntarily proposed

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proposed to cause its removal. A deputation of victuallers waited on the Town Commissioners at their meeting to-day urging to have a public slaughter-house built, and promising that they would then cease killing in town. A committee was named to report on the subject.

"Bye-laws" have been framed for common lodging-houses, under the Public Health Act, 1878; the required notice will appear in the newspaper to-morrow, and a copy of the bye-laws will lie in the board room for one month for inspection of ratepayers, &c., as required under Section 221, Public Health Act, 1878.

As regards your inquiry whether "there have been any new cases of fever since Friday last":

Six cases have been admitted into hospital; the Town Commissioners appear desirous to carry out the orders of the Local Government Board in sanitary matters.

The documents received with your letter of 23rd instant are returned herewith.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. Brodie.*

The Local Government Board, Dublin.

LODGING HOUSES (QUEENSTOWN).

COPIES of REPORT of THOMAS GRAY, Esq., Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trade; and, of REPORTS made by Dr. BRODIE, Local Government Board Inspector, on the State of the LODGING HOUSES in QUEENSTOWN.

(*Mr. Moore.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
19 *June* 1882.

237.

H.—18. 7. 82.

Under 1 *oz.*

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